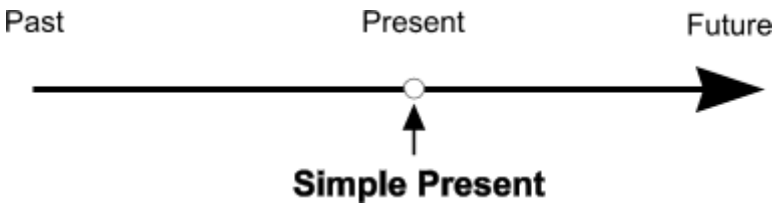
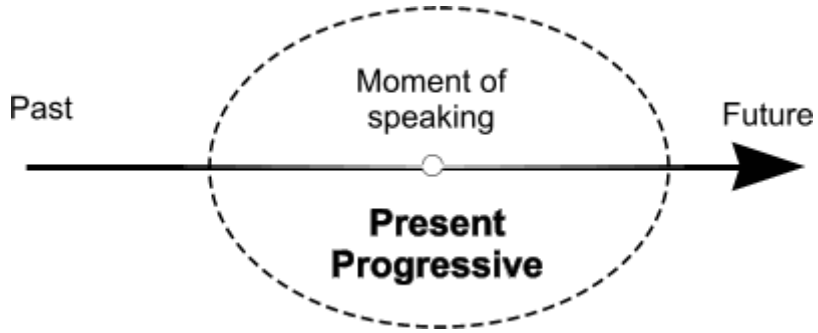
THE PRESENT TENSE

I - Simple present is also called present simple.



The simple present expresses an action in the present taking place once, never or several times. It is also used for actions that take place one after another and for actions that are set by a timetable or schedule. The simple present also expresses facts in the present.

II - The present progressive puts emphasis on the course or duration of an action.



The present progressive is used for actions going on in the moment of speaking and for actions taking place only for a short period of time. It is also used to express development and actions that are arranged for the near future.

Present progressive is also known as present continuous.

III - The present perfect simple expresses an action that is still going on or that stopped recently, but has an influence on the present. It puts emphasis on the result.

Form of Present Perfect

	Positive	**Negative**	**Question**
I / you / we / they	I have spoken.	I have not spoken.	Have I spoken?
he / she / it	He has spoken.	He has not spoken.	Has he spoken?

For irregular verbs, use the participle form (see list of irregular verbs, 3rd column). For regular verbs, just add “ed”.

Exceptions in Spelling when Adding ‘ed’

Exceptions in spelling when adding *ed*	**Example**
after a final *e* only add *d*	love – loved
final consonant after a short, stressed vowel	admit – admitted
or *l* as final consonant after a vowel is doubled	travel – travelled
final *y* after a consonant becomes *i*	hurry – hurried

Use of Present Perfect

- puts emphasis on the result

  Example: She *has written* five letters.

- action that is still going on

  Example: School *has* not *started* yet.

- action that stopped recently

  Example: She *has cooked* dinner.

- finished action that has an influence on the present

  Example: I *have lost* my key.

- action that has taken place once, never or several times before the moment of speaking

  Example: I *have* never *been* to Australia.

Signal Words of Present Perfect

- already, ever, just, never, not yet, so far, till now, up to now

IV - The present perfect progressive expresses an action that recently stopped or is still going on. It puts emphasis on the duration or course of the action.

Form of Present Perfect Progressive

	Positive	Negative	Question
I / you / we / they	I have been speaking.	I have not been speaking.	Have I been speaking?
he / she / it	He has been speaking.	He has not been speaking.	Has he been speaking?

Exceptions in Spelling

Exceptions in spelling when adding *ing*	Example
final *e* is dropped (but: *ee* is not changed)	come – coming (but: agree – agreeing)
after a short, stressed vowel, the final consonant is doubled	sit – si**tt**ing
l as final consonant after a vowel is doubled (in British English)	travel – trave**ll**ing
final *ie* becomes *y*	lie – l**y**ing

Use of Present Perfect Progressive

- puts emphasis on the duration or course of an action (not the result)

  Example: She *has been writing* for two hours.

- action that recently stopped or is still going on

  Example: I *have been living* here since 2001.

- finished action that influenced the present

  Example: I *have been working* all afternoon.

Signal Words of Present Perfect Progressive

- all day, for 4 years, since 1993, how long?, the whole week